

WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ERA OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD: Study on the Hadith Transmitters of the Women Companions

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ABSTRACT

Most of Moslem societies define the role of woman in the purely domestic sector. Some people consider that Islam stands against women's role in public sectors believing that it has roots in the context of the prophet's time. This work shows that there is no prohibition for woman to take parts in the public and social affairs including in the area of political role. It was the case that some women companions of the prophet participated in the political role including Aisyah the wife of Nabi Saw, Asma binti Abu Bakar, Ummu Athiyah, Ummu Hani' and Rubayyi' bint Mu'awidz. In this paper, the writer focuses on woman companion hadith transmitters who are directly wrapped up in the missionary work with the prophet. In addition, this paper also shows the relation between woman companion transmitter activities and their hadith transmission, under assumption that the role of woman would influence the texts of the transmitted hadiths. It is because, as a text, hadith was transmitted in the certain context and condition. Accordingly, every transmitter had different hadith transmission based on her context, status, profession, and even gender construction. Therefore, this paper discusses the woman companion transmitters who play their role in the field of politics and also their influence in their transmitted hadiths.

Keywords: Politics, role of women, transmitter, hadith.

INTRODUCTION

Women have at least two roles regarding the roles of women i.e. social or public role and domestic role. Social role refers to the functions in a society for example earning a living or being active in many fields such as social, economy, politic, religion etc. On the other hand, women also have a domestic responsibility in a household as being a wife or a mother. In a society, those of roles related to the gender mainstream. Everyone who was born as a man or woman will be a man or woman as the society construction.¹ Therefore,

¹Etymologically, a role means a behavior or an act. A role is defined as a set of behaviors expected from an individual to be performed based on the certain social status formally or informally i.e. a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms, and behaviors of an individual to be accepted and performed. <http://kbbi.web.id/peran2>.

the society determines what compatible roles for man and woman. Then, the role of both man and woman in the gender construction is an expectation for man and woman behaviour based on their identity in the society gender construction. Moreover, the domestic role is more compatible than public role for woman and on the contrary the public role is more compatible for man than domestic

Many noted that Islam brought many changes in the culture and social practices of Arabic society, much more than simply a change of beliefs. Islam was not only as a new religion that had changed the society belief, but also as new social life that was differ from previous period. Mohammad also had serious attention to the issue of slavery, and all of people who were oppressed. Some of his policies solved these social problems and became revolutionary action at that time. For example the inheritance issue for women; previously women were properties to be inherited. Islam changes this position by making women as inheritor (although they were only given a half portion compared to the inheritance received by men). Mohammad also gave opportunity to - woman to join war. There were some woman such as Ummu Athiyah,² Rubayyi' binti Mu'awwizh³ who participated in the battle. Those examples showed how women were involved in public and social affairs. Muhammad also once commanded a woman (Umm Waraqah) to be a praying Imam in her family.⁴ Those examples showed how women were involved in public and social affairs. Therefore, it was expected that many women companions were listed as proactive women as they transmitted many hadiths.

This paper aims to show the public women' roles in early Muslim era focusing on women companions' political role because they were directly involved in the *Da'wah* delivered by Muhammad. Considering the term "companion" (*Shahaba*) has a broad range of meanings, in this paper, women companions (*Shahabi*) will refer to the female companions who transmitted hadiths,⁵ This position is take due to the assumption that the role of these women can be seen in the hadiths they transmitted. A hadith which is a narrated "text" derived from the Prophet would certainly emerge in a certain situation and context. Therefore, the hadiths transmitted by one companion might be different from

²IbnHajjaj Muslim, *Shahih Muslim*, volume V, (Kairo: al-Halabiwa Auladuh, T.th), p. 199

³Muhammad Ismail Bukhari, *Shahih al-Bukhari*, volume 6, (T.tp: Dar wa Mathabi' al-Sya'b, T.th), p. 460

⁴Imam Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abi Dawud*, volume I, hadith No.500, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutb al-Ilmiyyah, T. th), p. 396-397. See also Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal*, volume VI, hadith No 26023, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, T.th) p. 405

⁵Subhi al-Shalih, *Ulumul Hadis wa Mushtalahuhu*, (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm li al-Malayin, 1977), p. 351-2. See also Muhammad 'Ajjaj al-Khathib, *Ushulu al-HadisUlumuhu Wa Mustalahuhu*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1989), p. 387.

those transmitted by other companion. Even the status and occupation of a companion could be a factor in determining a hadith. Conclusively, this paper will cover the women companions who had played significant roles in political affairs and how they were related to the hadiths that they transmitted.

IDENTIFYING THE HADITH TRANSMITTERS OF THE WOMEN COMPANIONS

The term companion comes from an Arabic “*al-shahabah*” which means a friend, an acquaintance, an accompanying person, an assistant, and a follower. The definition and the concept of the companions of the Prophet is not merely a single concept but to be precise there are some definition that can be derived from the term companion. The definition of “companion” widely used by Imams is the one proposed by Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalani that is someone who ever saw the Prophet (*laqiya*), believed in him (*amana*), and died as a Moslem (*wa mata ‘ala islamih*).⁶ The term *laqiya* already includes seeing the Prophet and attending his congregation. *Amana* does not include those who believed in Allah after the Prophet’s demise (*al-muhadramin*). The term *mata ‘ala islamih* refers to those who became forever apostates.⁷

The number of female hadith transmitters mentioned in the hadith *al-kutub al-tis’ah* is 328 transmitters. The highest female transmitters is recorded in the companion *thabaqah* compared to the following *thabaqahs* who were only 133 among 1046 transmitters.⁸ Then the number of female hadith transmitters in senior *tabi’in* period (second *thabaqah*) is 30 among 438 transmitters. In the transitional *tabi’in* period (third *thabaqah*) there were 93 female among 1467 transmitters and in the post-transitional *tabi’in* period (fourth *thabaqah*) there were 36 female among 875 transmitters. There were 10 female among 576 transmitters, 15 female among 1.119 transmitters, and 11 female among 943 transmitters in the junior *tabi’in* period (fifth *thabaqah*), in the sixth *thabaqah*, and in the senior *atba’ tabi’in* period (seventh *thabaqah*) respectively. In the transitional *atba’ tabi’in* period (eighth *thabaqah*), the ninth *thabaqah*, the tenth *thabaqah*, and the eleventh *thabaqah*, there was no a single female hadith transmitter recorded.⁹

The number of women hadith transmitters of the companions was the most,

⁶Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani, *al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah*, (Mesir: al-Maktabah al-Tijjariyah, 1358), volume I, p. 10.

⁷Fuad Jabali, *The Companions of the Prophet....*p. 86-87.

⁸This number is different from what Agung Danarta state in his dissertation which is 132 of hadith transmitters of the women companions. See Agung Danarta, “Perempuan Periwayat Hadis dalam *al-Kutub al-Tis’ah*”, *Dissertation*, Pasca Sarjana Program UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2007, p. 186

⁹*ibid.*,

compared to the next era. That fact may be an indication and explanation on how women in the Prophet era had been involved in the society. The women actions and roles in the society (read: in public) during the Prophet era were significantly greater compared to those in before and after the era. This alteration and transformation in the Muslim society between the first and third century of Hijr were the factor causing the decreasing of women accomplishment in transmitting hadiths.

Regarding the quality of hadith transmission, female hadith transmitters are indisputable. Most of them are considered positive by *jarh wa tadil* Imams. This is mentioned by Az-Zahabi in his book that he did not find any woman had been accused of dishonesty and whose hadith had been abandoned. Even if there were female hadith transmitters they were considered unconvincing, due to insufficient information concerning their background. In the book of *al-Du'afa wa al-Matrukin*, which contains information about *dhaif* transmitters, An-Nasa'I explains that among *dhaif* transmitters there is only one female transmitter whom An-Nasa'I does not use critical expression to address. The similar information is also found in *jarh wa tadil* books written by other hadith Imams. This shows that regarding hadith transmission, female hadith transmitters' quality and credibility are acknowledged. Especially concerning the equality requirements for hadith transmitters, there was one condition stated that hadith transmitters must be male.¹⁰

Initial identification of the 133 female transmitters confirmed that among ten female hadith transmitters who transmitted the most hadiths, five of them were the wives of the Prophet i.e. Aisyah bint Abu Bakar transmitted 5965 hadiths, Hindun bint Abi Umayyah transmitted 622 hadiths, Maimunah bint Haris transmitted 172 hadiths, Hafsa bint Umar transmitted 147 hadiths, and Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan who transmitted 147 hadiths. In addition to the list, there were also other female hadith transmitters who were not the wives of the Prophet i.e. the Prophet's sister in law Asma' bint Abu Bakar who transmitted 209 hadiths, the Prophet stepdaughter Zainab bint Abi Salamah who transmitted 177 hadiths, the Prophet's cousin Fathimah bint Abi Thalib who transmitted 87 hadiths. Among the ten transmitters who transmitted the most hadiths, only two of them were not the relatives of the Prophet i.e. Nusaibah bint Ka'ab (Ummu Athiyah) who transmitted 119 hadiths and Shafiyah bint Syaibah who transmitted 116 hadiths.

Concerning the habitation, Medina was the domicile of the majority of female hadith transmitters, 65 transmitters. Other places were Maru al-Radh where 6

¹⁰Ali Muhanif (ed.), *Perempuan dalam Literatur Klasik*, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2002), p. 50.

female hadith transmitters lived in, Basrah where 3 female hadith transmitters lived in, Syam where 2 female hadith transmitters lived in and other unknown places where other female hadith transmitters might live in. This is reasonable since Medina at that time was the central transmission of hadiths. Medina was the central city of Muslims since the Prophet emigrated from Mecca until his last breath. Medina was also the city where the government located during *khulafaur Rasyidin* era and thus many companions lived there. There were some companions who lived in a city and deceased in a different city such as Maimunah bint Haris who lived in Medina and deceased in Sarkhas, Asma bint Abu Bakar who lived in Medina and deceased in Maru al-Radh, Zainab bint Abi Salamah who lived in Medina and deceased in Maru al-Radh, Ummu Haram bint Malikan who lived in Medina and deceased in Kufah, and Fatimah bint Qais who lived in Medina and deceased in Fiid.¹¹

Regarding the ethnicity of the companions, most female companions were from Ansar (an-Ansariyah) which were 28 women and the second most female companions were from Quraisy (al-Quraisyiyah), 12 women. The dominance of female companions from Ansar who were native to Medina related to the fact that Medina was the central city of Muslims at that time. On the other hand, the female companions from Quraisy were immigrant women from where the Prophet Muhammad came from.

POLITICAL ROLE OF HADITH TRANSMITTERS OF THE WOMEN COMPANIONS AND THE TRANSMITTED HADITHS

Politics had been considered as a field that was not suitable for women. Even now, women's involvement in politics is considered low. 14 centuries ago, the presence of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca proved that women could also be taking part in politics. There were several women companions in the Prophet era that held important role in politics.¹² Their actions included supporting the instigation of Muslim community in Mecca, contributing in the emigration seeking political asylum from the authority outside Mecca, participating in the formation of Muslim community in Medina, self-understanding in the enemy's assault, and determining the community management policy in Medina.¹³ In this section is provided some explanation of the women companions that played important role in politics and the relation with the hadiths transmission.

¹¹CD ROM: *Mausu'ah al-Hadis al-Syarif al-Kutub al-Tis'ah*.

¹²According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, politics has several meanings: (1) knowledge of governance (like government system, basic government), (2) any issue and action (policy, strategy, etc.) about the government or of other country, and (3) the way to act (in dealing with problems), policy. <http://kbbi.web.id/politik>.

¹³Yusuf al-Qrdawi, *Min Fiqh al-Daulah fi al-Islam*, (Beirut: Dar al-Syuruq: 1997), page 161-162, see also Abu Syuqqah, *Tahrir al-Mar'ah*, juz I, page 60.

1. Asma bint Umais

Her full name was Asma bint Umais ibn Ma'd ibn Taym ibn Haris ibn Malik ibn Quhafah ibn 'Amir ibn Rabi'ah ibn Mu'awiyah ibn Zaid ibn Malik ibn Nasyr ibn Wahb Allah ibn Syahran ibn 'ifrisy ibn Aftal. Her mother was Hindun bint Khaulah ibn Auf ibn Zahir ibn Haris ibn Hamathah from Jusyar.

Asma was a woman companion who became a Muslim and took an oath to the Prophet before the Prophet entering Darul Arqm in Mecca. She was also a companion who with other 3 women companions went with the army to emigrate seeking the political assembly to save the fight so that the few Muslims at that time would not be devastated by the power of infidel Quraish. The first emigration to Habasya was not an easy journey. There were a lot of struggles faced by the companions during the journey.¹⁴ Asma headed off to Habasya with her husband Ja'far ibn Abu Thalib and gave birth to 3 sons – Abdullah, Muhammad, dan 'Aunan—there.¹⁵ In a narration, the Prophet Muhammad stated that Asma had emigrated twice i.e. emigrating to Habasya and emigrating to the Prophet.

In 8 Hijr/630 Masehi her husband passed away in a war. Then Asma bint Umais got married for the second time with Abu Bakar al-Shiddiq and gave birth to a son Muhammad ibn Abi Bakar. When Abu Bakar passed away, Asma herself washed the deceased Abu Bakar's body as he asked before he passed away. After the decease of Abu Bakar, Asma got married for the third time with Ali ibn Abi Thalib and gave birth to two sons, Yahya and 'Aunan.¹⁶ One of the hadiths transmitted by Asma bint Umais which shows that Asma is a woman fighter of Habasya is provided below.

Narrated by 'Abdurrazaq: Ma'mar from Az Zuhri said: Abu Bakar ibn 'Abdurrahman ibn Harits ibn Hisyam said: Asma' binti 'Umais said: "The first time the Prophet was feeling ill, he was in Maimunah's house. When the illness was getting serious and he was unconscious, the wives considered to cure him by giving medicine through the side of his mouth. Then they did so. After the Prophet getting conscious, he asked: "What is this?" We answered: "This is the doing of the women who come from here – then she pointed out Habasyah – and at that moment Asma' bint Umais was with them. Then they said: "We believe that you suffer from TBC, the Messenger of Allah." The Prophet said:

¹⁴Mahmud al-Mishri, 35 *Sirah Sahabiyah*, trans. Asep Sobari and Muhil Dhofir, (Jakarta: al-I'tisham Cahaya Umat, 2006), volume I, page 299.

¹⁵Muhammad ibn Sa'ad ibn Mani' al-Zuhri, *Kitab Thabaqat al-Kabir*, juz X fi al-Nisa', (Madinah: 2001), page 265-266.

¹⁶*Ibid*, page 268-270. See also Aisha Bewley, *Muslim Woman: A Biographical Dictionary*, (London: Ta-ha Publisher, 2004), page 25.

“Truly, it is a dangerous disease, Allah ‘azza wajalla would not make it infectious to me, then no one shall stay in this house unless he must take a medicine, except the uncle of the Messenger Al Abbas.” Abu Bakar ibn ‘Abdurrahman said: Truly, that day Maimunah took the medicine while she was fasting because of the suggestion of the Prophet.”

Asma bint Umais transmitted 24 hadiths from the Prophet. Several transmitters who transmitted hadiths from her were Abu Bakar ibn Abd Rahkab ibn Haris, Ummu ‘Aun bint Muhammad ibn Ja’far, Zaid ibn ‘Athiyah, Sa’id ibn Musayyab, Abdullah ibn Ja’far, Abdullah ibn Syaddad, ‘Ubaid ibn Rafa’ah, Urwah ibn Zahir, Fatimah bint Ali, Qasim ibn Muhammad, Mujahid ibn Jabar, and Ma’mar ibn Mutsanna.

2. Asma bint Abu Bakar

Asma was the wife of Zubair ibn Awwam, one of the companions who are guaranteed paradise. Asma was also known to be a woman companion who was active in politics. This is shown in the hadiths she transmitted, one of them discusses about the attire that the Prophet used during wars. Asma bint Abu Bakar transmitted 209 hadiths from the Prophet. She transmitted a lot of hadiths because she was close to the Prophet. The hadiths she transmitted varied from *fiqh*, public subject, to politics. Several transmitters who transmitted hadiths from her were Abu Bakar ibn Abdullah ibn Zubair, Bakr ibn Amr, Shafiyah bint Syaibah, ‘Ibad ibn Hamzah, ‘Ibad ibn Abdullah, Abdullah ibn ‘Ubaidillah, Abdullah ibn Kaisan, Urwah ibn Zubair, Fatimah bint Mandzur, Mujahid ibn Jabar, Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn Ubaidillah, Muslim ibn Abi ‘Aqrah and Muslim ibn Mikhqar.

The daughter of Abu Bakar dealt with many struggles during the early Muslim era. She took an oath to the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca and was the eighteenth to become a Muslim. She was married to Zubair ibn Awwam ibn Khuwailid ibn Asad and gave birth to children including Abdullah, Urwah, Mundzir, Muhajir, Khadijah, Ummu Hasan and Aisyah. Her son Abdullah was born in Quba during the journey to Medina for emigrating with the Prophet Muhammad. The little Abdullah was then directly given a prayer by the Prophet Muhammad and was declared as the first baby born Muslim.

The accomplishments of Asma bint Abu Bakar were narrated in history books. This is because Asma was one of the companions who were given a long lifespan, 100 years. Asma became a member and a witness of early Muslim historical journey until the sovereignty of bani Umayyah. According to Al-Dzahabi, Asma

was the last companion living from Muhajirin. Her political role was shown by how she was always involved in the *da'wah* and the fight of the Prophet Muhammad. For instance, delivering foods for the Prophet Muhammad in Tsur cave, preparing the stocks for the journey of emigration the Prophet and Abu Bakar so that she was called “Dzat al-Niqathain” (she who has two waist shawls). This epithet is given as when she was preparing foods for supplies she only had a waist shawl to bind the foods. Then Abu Bakar said. ‘Cut your shawl in half to be used to bind the foods for the Prophet and his father.’ Asma followed his words so she was then called “Dzat al-Niqathain”.¹⁷

Asma bint Abu Bakar was also known as a courageous companion. She was a woman companion who joined the battle of Yarmuk¹⁸ along with her husband Zubair.¹⁹ Her courage made Asma to be the respected among the companions. Asma passed away after the decease of her son Abdullah ibn Zubairin in 73 Hijr. Among hadiths that Asma bint Abu Bakar transmitted is Ahmad ibn Hambal, Kitab Baqi Musnad al-Anshary, Hadith Asma bint Abu Bakar, no. 25753.

“Narrated by Nashr ibn Bab from Hajjaj from Abu Umar, the step brother of Atha’ said: Asma has showed us a robe with silky-like embroidery. Asma said: “Truly, the Messenger Pbuh was wearing this when he faced enemies in wars.”

3. Aisyah binti Abu Bakar

Aisyah bint Abu Bakar who was also the wife of the Prophet Muhammad, who was also the sister of Asma was the daughter of Abu Bakar. Aisyah was listed as a qualified politician. History will never forget her accomplishment when she once was a leader of Jamal war against Ali ibn Abi Thalib. This proved that women at that time were also involved in practical politics.

Aisyah was known for her title *Ash-Shiddiqah* and frequently called as Ummu Abdullah.²⁰ The Prophet Muhammad occasionally called her *Humaira*, the only epithet given to Aisyah that was not given to any of the Prophet’s wives. This was a sign that Aisyah was a very special wife for the Prophet Muhammad.

¹⁷Muhammad ibn Sa’ad ibn Mani’ al-Zuhri, *Kitab Thabaqat al-Kabir*,..... page 240

¹⁸The war of Yarmuk is the war between Arab Muslim and Roman monarch in the 13 H/634 M or 4 years after the Prophet passed away. The war of Yarmuk is known as a historical war during the expansion of Islam as the sign of the beginning of Muslim subjection outside Arab in Umar ibn Khatib era. See Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Thabari, *Tarikh al-Thabari*, juz 3, (T.t: Dar al-Ma’arif, t.th).

¹⁹Muhammad ibn Sa’ad ibn Mani’ al-Zuhri, *Kitab Thabaqat al-Kabir*,..... Ibid.,

²⁰*Sunan Abu Daud*, chapter *al-Mar’ah Takni*, no. 4970 and *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, no.26285.

Aisyah was courageous, strong and rigid figure. She frequently joins the battle. In Uhud war, when the Muslims were defeated, she along with the women gave drinks to the wounded and carried water container to be filled and given to the *mujtahid*. In Khandaq war, she moved down from the fortress covering the Prophet Muhammad, the wives and children towards the front line.²¹

Aisyah was one of the companions who transmitted the most hadiths. It was recorded in the nine of hadith Kitab (*kutub al-tis'ah*) that 5965 hadiths were transmitted by Aisyah RA. Among her students were Ismail bin Thahman bin Syu'bah (Abu Sa'id), Ibrahim bin Amru (Abu Ishaq), Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Haris bin Asma bin Kharijah (Abu Ishaq), Ahmad bin Abi Bakar al-Qasim bin Haris (Abu Mush'ab), Ahmad bin Ismail bin Muhammad (Abu Khudzafah), Ahmad bin Abdullah bin Yunus bin Abdullah bin Qais (Abu Abdullah), Ishaq bin Sulaiman (Abu Abdullah), Ishaq bin Muhammad bin Ismail bin Abdullah (Abu Ya'qub), Ismail bin Ja'far bin Abi Katsir (Abu Ishaq), Ismail bin Abdullah bin Abdullah bin Aws (Abu Abdulah), Ismail bin Ja'far (Abu Mandzur), and etc. Among the hadiths transmitted by Aisyah related to politics are Book of Shahih Bukhari, no. Hadis 2467.

Narrated by Abu Ar Rabi' Sulaiman ibn Daud and Ahmad: Fulaih ibn Sulaiman dari Ibnu Syihab Az Zuhriy dari 'Urwah ibn Az Zubair dan Sa'id ibn Al Musayyab dan 'Alqamah ibn Waqashsh Al Laitsiy dan 'Ubaidullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Uqbah:

The wife of the Prophet, Aisyah, when the slanders said to her what they had said then Allah clean her name from this vile slander. Az Zuhry said: they all told me a set of Aisyah's stories, some were more precise and stronger than others. Then I observed every hadith that they told me from Aisyah. Each of the hadiths were strengthening. They assumed that Aisyah said: "Whenever the Prophet intended to go on a journey, he would draw lots amongst his wives and would take with him the one upon whom the lot fell. During the Ghazwa of his, he drew lots amongst us and the lot fell upon me, and I proceeded with him after Allah had decreed the use of the veil by women. I was carried in a Howdaj (on the camel) and dismounted while still in it. We departed and then the Prophet finished the war, we returned home. When approached the city of Medina, the Prophet ordered us to proceed at night. When the order of setting off was given, I walked till I past the army to answer the call of nature. After finishing, I returned (to the camp) to depart (with the others) and suddenly realized that my carnelian necklace over my chest was missing. So, I returned to look for it and was delayed because of that. The people who used to carry me on the camel, came to my Howdaj

²¹Sulaiman al-Nadawi, *Aisyah: Sejarah Lengkap Ummul Mukminin Aisyah RA*, trans. (Jakarta: Qisthi Press, 2007), page 169

and put it on the back of the camel, thinking that I was in it, at that time, women were light, and thin, and did not used to eat meat, and did not eat much. So, those people did not feel the difference in the heaviness of the Howdaj while lifting it. At that time I was a young lady. They set the camel moving and proceeding on. I found my necklace after the army had gone, and came to their camp to find nobody. So, I went to the place where I used to stay, thinking that they would discover my absence and come back in my search. While in that state, I felt sleepy and slept. Sofwan ibn Al Mu'aththol as-Sulamiy adz-Dzakwan was behind the army and reached where I was at and he saw a sleeping person. He came to me. He used to see me before veiling. So, I got up in surprised when he stopped his ride and made it knell down, and I sat over it. Then he set out walking, leading the camel by the rope till we reached the army who had halted to take rest at midday. Then whoever was meant for destruction, fell into destruction, and the leader of the false accusers was 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul. After that we returned to Medina, and I became ill for one month while the people were spreading the forged statements of the false accusers. I was feeling during my ailment as if I were not receiving the usual kindness from the Prophet which I used to receive from him when I got sick. He would only come, greet and asked about my condition using only signals. I did not know anything of what was going on till I recovered from my ailment and went out with Ummu Misthoh to the place where we used to answer the call of nature, and we used not to go to answer the call of nature except from night to night and that was before we had lavatories near to our houses. And this habit of ours was similar to the habit of the old Arabs in the open country (or away from houses). So, I and Ummu Misthoh bint Abu Ruhum went out walking and stumbled because of her long dress and on that she said, 'Let Misthoh be ruined.' I said, 'You are saying a bad word. Why are you abusing a man who took part in (the battle of) Badr?' She said, 'Oh my lady, didn't you hear what they said?' Then she told me the rumors. My sickness was aggravated, and when I returned home, the Prophet came to 's house'. Aisyah said: 'At that moment I wanted to be sure of the news through them.' Then the Prophet allowed me, and I went to my parents and asked my mother, 'What are the people talking about?' She said, 'Oh my daughter! Don't worry much about this matter. By Allah, never is there a charming woman loved by her husband who has other wives, but the women would forge false news about her.' I said, 'Glorified be Allah! Are the people really talking of this matter?' That night I kept on weeping and could not sleep till morning. The Prophet called 'Ali ibn Abu Thalib and Usamah ibn Zaid when he saw the divine inspiration delayed, to consul them about divorcing his wife. Usamah ibn Zaid said what he knew of the good reputation of his wives and added: 'Oh the Messenger of Allah, keep you wife, for, by Allah, we know nothing about her but good.' 'Ali ibn Abu Thalib said, 'Oh the Messenger of Allah, Allah has no

imposed restrictions on you, and there are many women other than she, yet you may ask the woman-servant who will tell you the truth.' On that the Prophet called Barirah and said: 'Oh Barirah, did you ever see anything which roused your suspicions about her?' Barirah said: 'No, by Allah Who has sent you with the truth, I have never seen in her anything faulty except that she is a girl of immature age, who sometimes sleeps and leaves the dough for the goats to eat.' On that day the Prophet ascended the pulpit and requested that somebody support him in punishing 'Abdullah ibn Ubay ibn Salul. The Prophet said: 'Who will support me to punish the person who has hurt me by slandering the reputation of my family? By Allah, I know nothing about my family but good, and they have accused a person about whom I know nothing except good, and he never entered my house except in my company.' Sa'ad ibn Mu'adz got up and said: 'Oh the Messenger of Allah, by Allah, I will relieve you from him. If that man is from the tribe of the Aus, then we will chop his head off, and if he is from our brothers, the Khazraj, then order us, and we will fulfil your order.' On that Sa'ad ibn 'Ubadah, the leader of the Khazraj and before this incident, he had been a pious man, got up, motivated by his zeal for his tribe and said: 'You have told a lie; you cannot kill him, and you will never be able to kill him.' On that Usaid ibn Hudhoir got up and said: 'You are a liar. We will kill him. You are a hypocrite, defending the hypocrites.' The two tribes of Aus and Khazraj got excited and were about to fight each other, while the Prophet was still standing on the pulpit. He got down and quietened them till they became silent and he kept quiet. On that day I kept on weeping so much so that neither did my tears stop, nor could I sleep. In the morning my parents were with me and I had wept for two nights and a day, till I thought my liver would burst from weeping. Aisyah said: 'While they were sitting with me and I was weeping, an Ansari woman asked my permission to enter, and I allowed her to come in. She sat down and started weeping with me. While we were in this state, the Prophet came and sat down and he had never sat with me since the day they forged the accusation. No revelation regarding my case came to him for a month.' Aisyah said: 'He recited Tashahhud (i.e. None has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad the Messenger) and then said, 'Oh Aisyah, I have been informed such-and-such about you; if you are innocent, then Allah will soon reveal your innocence, and if you have committed a sin, then repent to Allah and ask Him to forgive you, for when a person confesses his sin and asks Allah for forgiveness, Allah accepts his repentance. When the Prophet finished his speech my tears ceased completely and there remained not even a single drop of it. Then I requested my father to reply to the Prophet: 'Reply to the Prophet about me.' My father said: 'By Allah, I do not know what to say to the Prophet.' Then I requested my father to reply to the Prophet: 'Reply to the Prophet about me.' My mother said: 'By Allah, I do not know what

to say to the Prophet.' Aisyah said: 'I was a young girl and did not have much knowledge of the Quran. I said. 'I know, by Allah, that you have listened to what people are saying and that has been planted in your minds and you have taken it as a truth. Now, if I told you that I am innocent and Allah knows that I am innocent, you would not believe me and if I confessed to you falsely that I am guilty, and Allah knows that I am innocent you would believe me. By Allah, I don't compare my situation with you except to the situation of Yusuf's father when he said: ('Be patience with the good patience and it is Allah (Alone) whose help can be sought.') (QS. Yusuf:18) Then I went to my bed hoping that Allah would prove my innocence. By Allah I never thought that Allah would reveal divine inspiration in my case, as I considered myself too inferior to be talked of in the Holy Quran. I had hoped that the Prophet might have a dream in which Allah would prove my innocence. By Allah, the Prophet had not got up and nobody had left the house before the divine inspiration came to the Prophet. So, there overtook him the same state which used to overtake him. He used to be (on being inspired divinely) sweating so much so that the sweat dropped heavily. When that state of the Prophet was over, he was smiling and the first word he said: 'Oh Aisyah, thank Allah, for Allah has declared your innocence.' My mother told me to go to the Prophet. I replied: 'By Allah I will not go to him and will not thank but Allah.' So Allah revealed: "Verily! They who spread the slander are a gang among you..." (QS. Annur: 11) When Allah gave the declaration of my innocence, Abu Bakar ash-Shiddiq, who used to provide for Mithah ibn Utsatsah for he was his relative, said: 'By Allah, I will never provide Mithah with anything because of what he said about Aisyah.' But Allah later revealed: "And let not those who are good and wealthy among you swear not to help their kinsmen, those in need and those who left their homes in Allah's Cause. Let them forgive and overlook. Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? Verily! Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (QS. Annur:22) After that Abu Bakar said: 'Yes ! By Allah! I like that Allah should forgive me,' and resumed helping Mithah whom he used to help before. The Prophet also asked Zainab bint Jahsy about me saying: 'What do you know and what did you see?' She replied: 'Oh the Messenger, I refrain to claim hearing or seeing what I have not heard or seen. By Allah, I know nothing except goodness about Aisyah.' Aisyah further added "Zainab was competing with me (in her beauty and the Prophet's love), yet Allah protected her (from being malicious), for she had piety." It is narrated from Fulaih from Hisyam ibn 'Urwah from 'Urwah from Aisyah and 'Abdullah ibn Zubair like this hadith. It is also narrated from Fulaih from Rabi'ah ibn Abi 'Abdurrahman and Yahya ibn Sa'id from Al Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakar.

4. Ummu Hani

Another woman companion who transmitted hadiths was Ummu Hani. She was a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad. She ever guaranteed safety for several Non-Muslims (safety guarantee was an important aspect in politics). Her action was justified by the Prophet. Ummu Hani's full name was Fakhitah bint Abi Thalib. She was born in Medina. Her father was Abu Thalib ibn 'Abdul Muthalib ibn Hasyim ibn Abdi Manaf ibn Qushay. Her mother was Fatimah bint Asad ibn Hasyim ibn Abdul Manaf ibn Qushay. She was married to Hubairah ibn Abi Wahab al-Mahzumy.²² The family relationship with the Prophet made her transmit many hadiths from the Prophet, 87 hadiths. Some transmitters who transmitted hadiths from her were Abu Shalah, Judah, Abd Rahman ibn Abi Laily, Abdullah ibn Haris, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Abdullah ibn Abdullah ibn Haris, 'Urwah ibn Zubair, Atha' ibn Abi Rabah, Mujahid ibn Jabar, Muhammad ibn 'Aqabah, Harun ibn Ummu Hani, Yahya ibn Judah, Yazid ibn Ma'ala 'Aqil, Yusuf ibn Mahik. Among hadiths she transmitted were those that explain the safety guarantee for Non-Muslims as found in Abu Dawud, Kitab Jihad, chapter Fi Amani al-mar'ah, no.2382.

Narrated by Ahmad ibn Shalih: Ibnu Wahab said that 'Iyadh ibn Abdullah from Makhramah ibn Sulaiman from Kuraib ibn Abbas said: Ummu Hani' bint Abi Thalib has protected a Non-Muslim man during the subjection of Mecca. Then he came to the Prophet and told him about it. Then the Prophet said: "We protect the people you protect and we guarantee safety the people you guarantee."

5. Nusaibah binti Kaab (Ummu Athiyah)

Another woman who played a role in politics was Nusaibah bint Ka'ab. Nusaibah bint Ka'ab or Ummu Athiyah al-Anshariyah was one of the women companions who were not from the family of the Prophet but was included in the list of ten women companions who transmitted the most hadiths. There are 119 hadiths in *kutub al-tis'ah* that are from her. Nusaibah bint Ka'ab or Ummu Athiyah was also one of the women companions involved in wars along with the Prophet. She was responsible in preparing foods for the Muslim fighter, treating the wounded, and nursing the injured. Ummu Athiyah was also one of the women companions from Basrah. Therefore she was one of the main resources of hadiths of the Prophet in Basrah.²³

²²Muhammad ibn Sa'ad bin Mani' al-Zuhri, *Kitab Thabaqaat al-Kabir*, (Kairo: tp,t.th) page 47-48

²³Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalani, *Tahdzib al-tahdzib*, juz xii, page 455, see also *al-Isabah*, jilid IV, page 477.

The hadiths transmitted by Ummu Athiyah were directly sourced from the Prophet and some other parts were sourced from Umar ibn al-Khattab. The transmitters who transmitted hadiths from her were Anas ibn Malik, Muhammad ibn Sirin, Hafsa binti Sirin, Abdul Malik ibn Umayr, Ismail ibn Abdurrahman ibn Athiyah, Ali ibn al-Aqmar, dan Ummu Sarahil. A total of 119 hadiths transmitted by Ummu Athiyah consist of several topics including *fiqh* and war. Almost all of the hadiths transmitted by Ummu Athiyah related to *fiqh* like: wudhu, menstruation, prayer, *haji*, accepting gifts, and *thalaq*. Several hadiths she transmitted are related to the path of women and 5 hadiths about wars/*jihad*. Provided below is one in the Shahih Muslim, kitab jihad wa siyar, about war, hadith no. 3380.

Narrated by Abu Bakar ibn Abu Syaibah: Abdurrahim ibn Sulaiman from Hisyam from Hafshah bint Sirin from Ummu 'Athiyah al Anshariyah, she said: "I went to war with the Prophet seven times. I stayed in their camp, cooked foods for them, treated the wounded, and nursed the injured." And 'Amru An Naqid told us from Yazid ibn Harun told us from Hisyam ibn Hasan with this isnad"

6. Rubayyi' binti Mu'awwidz

Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidz was known as one of the women companions who were courageous. Her courage was influenced by her father who was one of the associates of the operation of murdering Abu Jahal. Rubayyi' was also known as a companion who had a close relationship with the Prophet, shown in several stories about the Prophet visiting her house and giving gifts. Rubayyi' transmitted 44 hadiths from the Prophet explaining the role of the Prophet in politics i.e when in a war where Rubayyi' also served the fighters and took the deceased and wounded home to Medina.

Some transmitters who learned from Rubayyi' were Abu Ubaidah ibn Muhammad ibn Abdullah, Khalid ibn Dzikwan (Abu Husain), Sulaiman ibn Yasar, Ubaidah ibn Walid ibn Ubadah ibn al-Shamad (Abu Al-Shamat), Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aqil ibn Abi Thalib (Abu Muhammad), Muhammad ibn Abdul Rahman ibn Tsauban (Abu Abdullah), Nafi' maula ibn Umar (Abu Abdullah). Rubayyi' received the hadiths from the Prophet and from Usman ibn Affan as well. Among the hadiths transmitted by Rubayyi' related to her political role is provided below.

Narrated by Mussadad: Bisyr ibn Al Mufadhdhal from Khalid ibn Dzakwan, Ar-Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidz said: "We went to wars along with the Prophet PbuH where we gave drinks to the fighters, served

them and took home the wounded and the deceased to Medina.”

7. Ummu Haram bint Malihan

Her full name was Ummu Haram bint Malihan ibn Khalid ibn Zaid ibn Haram ibn Jundab ibn ‘Amir ibn Ghanm ibn ‘Ady ibn Ibn Najjar. Her husband was ‘Ubadah ibn al-Shamat who went to the wars with Ummu Haram. Ummu Haram was the aunt of Anas ibn Malik, a companion who was included as those who first become Muslim.²⁴ Ummu Haram transmitted 11 hadiths from the Prophet. Among them were hadiths explained the good news from the Prophet that she would become a *syahidah*. What the Prophet delivered was then became reality when in Mu’awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan era, Ummu Haram join the battle with her husband. After sailing back to the land, Ummu Haram was attacked by her ride until she passed away.

Several hadith transmitters who learned from her were Anas ibn Malik ibn al-Nadhr ibn Zaid ibn Haram (Abu Hamzah), Atha ibn Yasar (Abu Muhammad), Amru ibn Aswad (Abu ‘Iyadz), Ya’la ibn Syadad ibn Aws (Abu Tabit). Here is among the hadiths explaining her role in politics as found in Kitab Shahih Bukhari, no. Hadith 2707.

Narrated by Ishaq ibn Yazid Ad-Dimasyqi: Yahya ibn Hamzah from Tsaar ibn Yazid from Khalid ibn Ma’dan, that ‘Umar ibn Al Aswad Al ‘Ansiy told him that he met ‘Ubadah ibn ash-Shomit when he was in the journey to Himsh. At that moment he was in his house with Ummu Haram. ‘Umar said: “Then Ummu Haram told us that she heard the Prophet said:” The first army going to war across the sea will be given reward and paradise.” Ummu Haram said: I said: “The Messenger, am I among them?” The Prophet said: “Yes, you are among them.” The Prophet said again: “The army of my people that first fought against Qaisar (Roman), they will be forgiven.” I said: “Am I among them, the Messenger?” The Prophet said: “No.”

From several hadiths above, it is shown that women in the early Muslim era had important roles in the society especially in politics. Aisyah bint Abu Bakar transmitted more than five thousands hadiths. The hadiths transmitted by Aisyah including various subject: faith, morals, laws, *fiqh* (devotion, muamalah, women, and politics). In the Kitab Shahih Bukhari for example, the hadiths from Aisyah are all over chapters. There were only two chapters in which hadiths from Aisyah are not present: kitab *al-Musaqah* dan kitab *fi al-luqathah*.

²⁴Muhammad ibn Sa’ad bin Mani’ al-Zuhri, *Kitab Thabaqaat al-Kabir*,.....*Ibid*, page 40-405

Nusaibah bint Ka'ab (Ummu Athiyah) transmitted 119 hadiths generally explaining *fiqh* about devotion and women. However, there were 5 hadiths transmitted by Ummu Athiyah related to wars. This also shows that Ummu Athiyah was a woman companion who was actively involved in the *ummah* issues. Nusaibah were recorded to join the war along with the Prophet. She treated the wounded and preparing foods for the Muslim fighters. Asma bint Abu Bakar was also a woman companion recorded in history as a woman who was actively involved in politics. This is shown shown from the hadiths she transmitted. The same goes for Rubayyi' bint Mu'awwidz, Ummu Hani' and Ummu Haram bint Malihan.

Therefore, it is shown that the women companion in the Prophet era did not only have roles in the domestic (as a housewife) but also they actively played important role in public issues. They were involved in wars which were commonly related to men only. Generally, the role of women companions are: explicit *da'wah*, participation in emigration to Habasya and Medina, oath, and *jihad* and wars. They can be seen in the hadiths transmitted by the women companions mentioned above. The active role of women companions indicate that a hadith contains a phenomenon or an event transmitted that must be the same as what they saw and did at that time. Overall, hadiths also present the socio-cultural condition of women in Arab society in the Prophet.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE HADITH TRANSMITTERS OF WOMEN COMPANIONS AND THE HADITHS THEY TRANSMITTED AS WELL AS THE IMPLICATIONS OF HADITHS COMPREHENSION

One shall not underestimate the role of women companions in the Prophet era. The illustration in the hadiths transmitted by the women companions showed that a hadith is a text believed to be an Islamic learning text, not a clean text from the history. The history in this case is not only the history of Arab community, the history of the Messenger, but also the history of the hadith transmitters' subjectivity. The role of the companions in the society is reflected from the transmitted hadiths because as the first transmitters, they were directly experience the phenomenon with the Prophet. As stated by Khaleed Abou Fadl that every hadith is rooted in the Prophet was a final result of an authoring process. Actually, after investigating the historical condition thoroughly, someone may be able to conclude that a certain story tells many things about the Prophet, or maybe someone will conclude that a story tells more on the transmitters' historical condition. Therefore, the existence of this authoring would make somebody to understand the hadiths of the Prophet as

a history.²⁵

As a result, according to Abou Fadl, many transmitters were actually involved in the emergence of a story or a hadith. Every transmitter could play either the same role or a different role, based on the context. Abu Fadl provides a more detail explanation below.

“A text can be created by one or more author but the detail of the author is not only what is written in the cover of the book. Especially when the book is relating to oral tradition of the Prophet somebody must deal with the possibilities in the authoring process, not the author. Even if a book is written by one author and is only related to the author, in reality, it is produced by many intellectuals and social norms and values that shape the notion of the author.”²⁶

A text is arranged from sub-texts because a symbol occasionally includes sub-symbols and an entity also includes sub-entities. Furthermore, an author must be a part of the reader as he recognize and understand the text symbols; the reader takes part in the authoring process. In this case, a text may have various authors: the historical author who creates a text, the revision author who edits, changes, and rewrites the text, and the interpretation author who receives and creates new meanings of the symbols. These various authors do not hold the same role, but their role is adjusted to the certain context.²⁷

From what Abou Fadl writes, he wants to say that the Prophet is not God and the Prophet is a human being so that he is part of the history. The Prophet interacted with the history not as God but part of normal human live. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Prophet's morals and norms were in the context of history. The moral messages from the Prophet were provided and examined by their historical context but the context could not accommodate all of the truth and reality of the Prophet's moral knowledge. For that reason, hadtihs as the legacy of the Prophet could not be applied without the human involvement and authoring process. Therefore, when we analyze the activities of interpreting and communicating around the *sunnah* texts, the emerged problem will be how interpreting community reflects, understands, or puts the historical context in the authoring process. Because the interpretation must consider the authoring processes and all of its historical order transformation to understand the appropriate balance between the historical author –the

²⁵*Ibid.*, page 130-131.

²⁶Khaleed Abou Fadl, *Melawan “Tentara Tuhan” : Yang berwenang dan yang se-wenang-wenang dalam Wacana Islam*, (Jakarta: Serambi, 2003), page 105.

²⁷Khaleed Abou Fadl, *Atas Nama Tuhan....*, page 153-154.

Prophet –and various authors who provide contexts for the historical author.²⁸

The idea of the authoring process played an important role in understanding the interpretation of a story. Even if we assume that the Prophet actually made a statement, the statement could not reach us in a vacuum. Words and expressions frequently reach us with all the meanings. This surely strengthens the assumption that the companions shall not be liberated from critics. One example of hadith transmitter subjectivity is the misogynist hadiths²⁹ which have been considering women as a second class being turns out to be few of them that were transmitted by women transmitters. Among the misogynist hadiths are the hadiths about theology, such as: hadiths about most women will go to hell, hadiths about women are from the rib bones of men, women were lacking in religious field, women are symbolized as satan, women as a cause of disaster, women as a worldly slander. Also hadiths about devotion such as: the urine filth of women is twice than of men, women cannot be Imam for men, women are better to pray at home, women fasting must be on the husband's permission, women prayer *shaff* must be behind men, women going to *hajj* must be accompanied by a muhrim, the order of kneeling to husbands. Hadiths about muamalah like: women cannot be a leader, the custom of polygamy, the inheritance of women is half of men, women who ignore the husband' calls will be doomed, and the prohibition of receiving guest without husband's permission. Most of misogynist hadiths do not involve women transmitters. Here, the writer believes that the independence of the woman transmitters in choosing the stories to be transmitted finds the relevance. Therefore, the transmitting feature cannot be separated from the subjectivity of the transmitters because they only transmitted hadiths based on what they knew and what wanted to transmit.

CONCLUSION

Finally, this paper reveals the connection between the situation and condition of the women companions which give influence to the transmitted hadiths. Hadiths then served as the subsequent source of religious knowledge for Muslims. Therefore, the comprehension of hadiths is not sufficient without looking further to the transmitters. They were the ones who transformed the informations from the Prophet Muhammad. Consequently, even hadiths are believed rooted on the Prophet, the presence of the transmitters contributed

²⁸ *Ibid.*, page 162-163.

²⁹ Misogynist is a term from English "*misogyny*" which means "hatred to women". Jhon Echols and Hassan Shadily, *Kamus Inggris-Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1986), page. 382. The claim of the presence of misogynist aspect in hadiths is popularized by Fatima Mernissi, in her book, *Women and Islam: An Historical and Theological Enquiry*.

to the emergence of hadiths. Subjectivity of the transmitters can be seen in the hadiths they transmitted. The hadiths from the companions related to the situation and condition of the companions because of the intensity they met the Prophet and the phenomenon that they were in affected the transmitted hadiths. Therefore, research on the hadith transmitters of the companions is significantly needed. If the tradition of *jarh wa ta'dil* has been neglecting the *thabaqah* of the companions to be studied because of their high credibility, then the writer thinks that the companions must be researched especially the connection of the context and the phenomenon during the Prophet. This is because the companions were the ones who met the Prophet and who gave the primary information about hadiths. This paper also proves that in the Prophet era, the women companions played important role in the society not only in the domestic area as many people assumed. The presence of women in public area and their actions show the position of women in the Prophet era.

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